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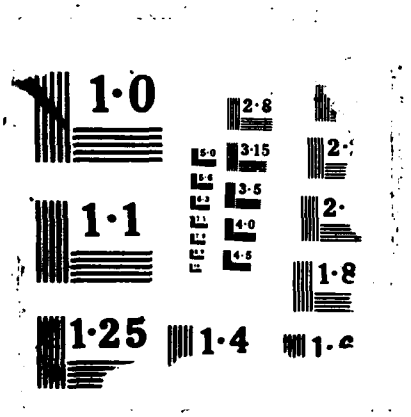
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STUDENT REPORT

SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP -
A STUDY OF TWO BATTALION COMMANDERS

MAJOR DONALD K. BIRDSEYE
MAJOR LAWRENCE C. ROSE, JR. 88-0295

"insights into tomorrow"

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The focus of this study is on the examination of the leadership philosophies and resulting leadership styles of two effective battalion commanders. The intent is to show that their leadership styles were the results of conscious actions on their part to match the style with the demands of the situation and the developmental level of their subordinates. The vehicle for this analysis is the Hersey and Blanchard Situational Leadership II Model. This study concludes that to be effective, no one style of leadership is always appropriate. Additionally, military leaders must use a balance of directive and supportive behavior as dictated by the situation.

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PREFACE

Military leadership and leader effectiveness have been studied by many individuals and groups with a wide range of perspectives and foci. These studies have generally drawn relationships between leadership and certain individual traits or characteristics. They have also used various models to describe the leadership process and measure leader effectiveness. In spite of the myriad of information available from these studies, leader ineffectiveness continues to be one of the greatest contributing factors to unit ineffectiveness in the Army today. The focus of this case study is the examination of the leadership philosophies and resulting leadership styles of two effective battalion commanders. The intent is to show that their leadership styles were the results of conscious actions on their part to match the style with the demands of the situation and the developmental level of their subordinates. The vehicle used in this analysis is the Hersey and Blanchard Situational Leadership II model.

The guidance and support of LTC Cordis B. Colburn and MAJ Michael Lenhart are gratefully acknowledged and have been instrumental in the completion of this project.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Major Lawrence C. Rose, Jr. graduated from North Carolina State University in 1973 and was commissioned in the Field Artillery. He entered active duty in November 1973 and went to the Field Artillery Officer Basic Course at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. Following graduation, he was assigned to B Btry, 22d FA in the 193d Infantry Brigade in the Panama Canal Zone. There his duties included Forward Observer, Survey Officer, Fire Direction Officer, Executive Officer and Brigade Fire Support Officer. After three years in Panama, he returned to Fort Sill to attend the Field Artillery Officers Advanced Course. In March 1978, he was assigned to the 82d Airborne Division Artillery and had duties of Assistant Divarty S-3, Battalion Fire Support Officer, and Battery Commander. Following that assignment, he served in Germany with the 3d Infantry Division as the Organizational Effectiveness Staff Officer, Assistant Division SGS, and finally as Aide-de-Camp to the Commanding General. From Germany he went to the 25th Infantry Division at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii. There his duties included Battalion S-3, Divarty S-1, and Division SGS. In August 1987, he attended the Air Command and Staff College at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, and Troy State University where he completed his Masters Degree. His other military schooling includes Airborne, Jumpmaster, the Field Artillery Target Acquisition Course, and the Organizational Effectiveness Staff Officer Course.

Major Donald K. Birdseye graduated from Florida State University in 1976 and was commissioned in the Field Artillery. Following the completion of the Field Artillery Officer Basic Course at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, he served in the 82d Airborne Division Artillery as a Fire Support Team Chief, Battery Fire Direction Officer, and Battery Executive Officer. After attending the Field Artillery Advanced Course, he was assigned to the 2d Infantry Division in Korea. His entire tour there was as a Battery Commander in the 2d Bn, 17th FA. The next two years were spent in the US Army Recruiting Command as a Recruiting Company Commander in Canton, Ohio. He then attended the Combined Arms Services Staff School at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. In June 1984, he moved to the 25th Inf Division Artillery where he served as the Divarty S-1 and as a Brigade Fire Support Officer. In August 1987, he attended the Air Command and Staff College at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, and completed his Masters Degree at Troy State University in the spring of 1988. His other military schooling includes Airborne, Jumpmaster, and the Recruiting Commander's Course

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Chapter One

INTRODUCTION: SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP - A STUDY OF TWO BATTALION COMMANDERS

There you are, sitting at your desk having just realized your ultimate dream of becoming a battalion commander. Earlier in the day you attended a Division Commander's meeting with all battalion and brigade commanders. In the meeting the division commander has discussed his guidance for the coming year as well as some rather harsh directives for things he wants done today. More recently, you have returned from a meeting with your Brigade level commander concerning your maintenance operation. You know the phone will ring any minute because as you left your boss' headquarters you saw him heading straight for your motor pool again. As you sit pondering your future, your S-3 and CSM enter your office to report that the ammunition never made it to the qualification range this morning and the range was visited by the Assistant Division Commander. The CSM also reports that your vehicle was declared not operationally ready by a roadside inspection team from Corps. The phone rings, your XO is calling from the motor pool; the boss wants you there right away. The initial euphoria of being a battalion commander has worn off. You are fully aware that the present situation and demands upon you and your organization will be the greatest leadership challenge you have faced thus far in your career.

This research paper is a study of situational leadership as described by the Hersey and Blanchard Situational Leadership II Model, and it will analyze two former battalion commanders who served during the same time frame under generally the same conditions. First, we will describe the model to include how Hersey and Blanchard's theory was developed and then will explain how the model is used to assess leadership style and adaptability. Following that, we will analyze the predominant leadership styles of the two commanders as a result of the Leader Effectiveness And Adaptability Description (LEAD). A sample of the LEAD is in Appendix A. The LEAD is a series of situations which describes a leader's behavior in a particular situation. Additionally, we will examine how they assessed their subordinate commanders and staffs as well as how the

commanders' leadership styles and effectiveness were seen by their subordinates. The study will show how these two commanders employed the principles of the Hersey and Blanchard model to achieve success and effectiveness and how the model can be used by other Army leaders for self development.

Over the years, there has been a great deal of research conducted on the different aspects of leadership. It is not our intention to address leadership in its entirety. Rather, we intend to focus on the development of leader behavior and style. We do not believe anyone yet has come up with a guaranteed roadmap that addresses all the different aspects of the subject. In doing this research, we never found two like definitions of the word leadership. Vice Admiral James B. Stockdale reinforced our finding when he said in 1985, "Leadership has been and will continue to be a primary object of discussion for military men as they seek to unravel its mysteries and understand its full implication. The problem is that there are too many definitions, and when one tries to zero in on leadership in the military, the true meaning becomes even more elusive."(17:10) The Army's Field Manual 22-100 defines leadership as "a process in which a soldier applies his or her beliefs, values, ethics, character, knowledge, and skills to influence others to accomplish a mission."(14:13) This rather broad definition may suggest that a good leader is a successful one which, perhaps, is true in some cases. On the other hand, is a successful commander necessarily a good leader? Bernard M. Bass, in discussing his philosophy on management by objectives, suggests the answer to that question is an unqualified no, and he further states that there is a "clear distinction between successful and effective leadership or management."(1:93) The reason is that leadership involves interactions between people. A successful leader gets the job done; an effective, successful leader depends on personal power generated upward from subordinates to meet requirements whereas the successful, ineffective leader relies upon position power and close supervision to achieve desired results.(1:95) The leader who relies upon position power will generally exert only "short-run" influence over others while the leader who relies upon personal power influences the "long-run productivity and organizational development."(1:95) Measuring leader success is easy and straight forward; measuring leader effectiveness equates to measuring organizational effectiveness which means assessing grey areas: perceptions, expectations, attitudes, values and goals, motivational forces, and behavior.(1:95) Directing, supporting, delegating, supervising, coaching, teaching, training, caring and many other terms describe some of the actions of leaders that determine their success and effectiveness. Each one of these traits may be perceived by subordinates and actually conducted by leaders in different

ways. This highlights the importance of a leader's ability to assess his subordinates' performance in comprehending and executing orders. The leader must also assess other factors that come to bear on the situation. This assessment will determine the type of leadership style the situation demands. Given the wide range of factors involved in military decision making and how they are interpreted by leaders, it is our belief that no two leaders will always assess a situation in the same manner. Their unit make-up, personnel, and other factors will cause them to make different decisions in many cases. This paper will look at how two commanders made their decisions and analyze them based upon the Hersey and Blanchard Situational Leadership II Model.

Therefore, though most units operate under many of the same physical and organizational constraints, we believe it is safe to say that no two units are exactly alike. As mentioned before, this case study concerns two lieutenant colonels assigned as battalion commanders of units with identical Tables of Organization and Equipment staffed and manned out of the same personnel system. Both were provided with the same home station, billet conditions, training opportunities, and mission. However, with all else being equal, there were perceived differences in their leadership styles. In order to assess the styles of these former battalion commanders, it is necessary to understand the Hersey and Blanchard Situational Leadership II Model.

Chapter Two

BACKGROUND: HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP

The purpose of this section is to provide an understanding of how Hersey and Blanchard's theory of Situational Leadership II was developed and what the theory postulates. It also includes a discussion of the four basic leadership styles used by Hersey and Blanchard in their model, a discussion of how leaders use these different styles, a description of how a leader's style range is measured, and how a leader's style adaptability is determined. The LEAD instrument is discussed along with an analysis of the results of the LEAD taken by the two subjects of this case study.

Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership II Model was developed from analysis of past philosophies, theories, and methods of describing leadership behavior and traits. In order to understand the development of situational theory, one must review earlier approaches to the study of leadership such as the Trait theory. This theory asserted that individuals were born with the requisite characteristics to be effective leaders and that these characteristics were transferable from situation to situation by the leader.(5:66) The theory also stated that the ability to lead was inherited and was not something that could be learned.(5:66) It did not, however, describe what leadership was in generic terms or what one could expect it to look like other than the identification of traits and qualities that enabled past leaders to lead. Further, studies conducted during the time could not identify any one trait found only in leaders that could be used to distinguish them from all other people.(5:66) Under this theory, the only way one would know if he had the requisite ability to lead was to go out and try. More importantly, the theory did not explain the success of those who responded to training and were successful over time.

The next step in the evolution of leadership theory was the result of Frederick Winslow Taylor's attempt to describe leadership through a Task Orientation--Scientific Management theory. His was a more scientific approach which focused on improving the techniques and effectiveness of subordinates through efficient leader administration and organization

resulting in higher productivity.(5:67) He asserted that leader requirements to insure efficient administration and organization, hence leadership, could be learned. Under Taylor's Task Orientation--Scientific Management theory, the leader was to establish performance objectives and criteria that were designed to meet organizational goals.(5:67) The focus of his theory directed leaders to be task conscious rather than people oriented in order to achieve organizational success.(5:69-70) This theory, although important in the development of later theories such as Management by Objective, did not completely take into account the human factor in achieving organizational objectives. By focusing on the organizational needs and not the needs of people, the leader's success, hence the success of the organization, would be a direct result of his ability to direct achievement rather than lead others to achieve.

Theories by industrial sociologists and psychologists, such as those of George Elton Mayo, as part of a human relations movement in the 1920's and 1930's followed the Task Orientation theory.(5:70) These theories stated that organizational goals could be achieved not only through increased organization and technology but more importantly, through leadership of individuals.(5:70) This theory asserted that it was important for people to know and understand what motivates other people in order to get them to achieve organizational aims. Under this theory, leaders became facilitators of human relations in pursuit of worker cohesion and cooperation leading to greater productivity and performance. Further, the theory asserted that leaders, while facilitating human relations, must also focus their efforts and those of their subordinates toward individual growth and development.(5:70) This theory re-oriented leaders to place more emphasis on the needs of individuals rather than the needs of the organization.

Additional studies resulted in the development of new theories such as McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y which categorized leaders into two groups: those who led by personal power and those who led by position power and Blake and Mouton's theory which categorized leaders into three distinct groups: authoritarian, democratic, and laissez faire.(5:70) Both of these theories took parts from the scientific management task oriented approach and the human relations people oriented approach in the development of their theories. The categories in both theories, although descriptive of certain leaders at certain times, did not fit any one leader or group of leaders all the time.(5:80) However, each style was found to have a time and place for use by almost every leader.(5:80)

The Michigan and Ohio State Leadership Studies further fueled the development of situational leadership. In simple terms, these studies concluded that leaders must be concerned both about the achievement of organizational objectives (task) and the human relations between themselves and their subordinates (relationship).(5:72-73; 15:64-65)

Hersey and Blanchard's development of the Situational Leadership II Theory followed this analysis and theorized that leaders would modify their styles based upon the situation: the circumstances of the moment and the developmental maturity of the people to be led.(15:18; 16:98) From this analysis, Hersey and Blanchard determined that there were four basic leadership styles. These styles were identified through the use of two variables in leader behavior: support and direction. The leadership styles identified in the model are connected through the use of the two variables as they are considered in each quadrant of the model (Figure 1).

Supportive Behavior (High)		
	High Support Low Directive Behavior S3	High Support High Directive Behavior S2
Supportive Behavior (Low)	Low Support Low Directive Behavior S4	Low Support High Directive Behavior S1

(Low) Directive Behavior (High)

Figure 1. The Four Basic Leadership Styles(16:183)

Directive behavior can be described by such terms as close supervision, one-way communication, highly structured environment, non-participatory decision-making, and direct control over the actions of subordinates.(16:98-99) Supportive behavior can be described by such terms as two-way communication, emphasis on people and social interaction, group decision-making, and praising.(16:99) The assumption is

that all leaders will use certain amounts of each type of behavior during the course of the problem-solving or decision-making process. Hersey and Blanchard use the terms directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating to describe the four basic leadership styles. These styles result from combinations of the two behaviors in the decision-making and problem-solving process (Figure 2).

Supportive (Low) Behavior (High)		
	Supporting S3	Coaching S2
	Delegating S4	Directing S1

(Low) Directive Behavior (High)

Figure 2. The Four Basic Leadership Styles as Types of Problem-Solving and Decision-Making Processes (6:184)

As previously mentioned, each of these leadership styles has a certain level of both behaviors as shown by the model. High-direction and low-support behavior (S1) is referred to as "directing." In this style, Hersey and Blanchard describe a situation where the leader is solely responsible for decision-making and problem-solving. The resulting decisions are announced to subordinates who are then closely supervised to insure compliance. The high direction and support behavior (S2) is described as "coaching" and involves the same basic leader actions as directing except that subordinate input is considered in the decision-making and problem-solving process and, leader support of subordinate action is increased. The low-direction and high-support behavior (S3) is labeled as "supporting." This style involves a shift in the decision-making and problem-solving process from the leader to the subordinate although the leader still retains some control. The low direction and support behavior (S4) is described as "delegating." The decision-making and problem-solving process becomes a joint effort between leader and subordinate with the subordinate primarily responsible for the implementation of the decision.

Hersey and Blanchard combine the leader styles and behaviors with an assessment of the developmental level of subordinates to create the Life Cycle Theory of Leadership. This theory addresses several aspects of leadership behavior and combines them into a single all encompassing model. The assertion is that leaders will modify their style based upon the developmental level (maturity) of their subordinates.(16:101) Hersey and Blanchard identify four follower developmental levels using competence and commitment as the variables.(6:185)

High Competence High Commitment	High Competence Variable Commitment	Some Competence Low Commitment	Low Competence High Commitment
D4	D3	D2	D1

Developed ◀ - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - Developing

The developmental levels are tied into the four basic leadership styles in the decision-making and problem-solving process resulting in the Situational Leadership II model as shown in Figure 3.

Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership II Theory simply states that a leader will tailor his or her leadership to a given situation based on these variables or uncontrollables, including the developmental level of their subordinates.(15:18) Hersey and Blanchard refer to the degree to which an individual's leadership behavior is appropriate to the demands of the situation as "style adaptability." They also address the development of followers or groups through the establishment of high but achievable task specific standards.(15:19) The purpose of these standards is to enable followers to understand and achieve organizational aims so that they may mature and become more productive. The Life Cycle Theory hypothesizes that as performance improves, the leader will decrease the amount of direction provided to the group while increasing his support.(16:101,105) In other words, he will move along the curve from directing to coaching as the performance of his subordinates improves.

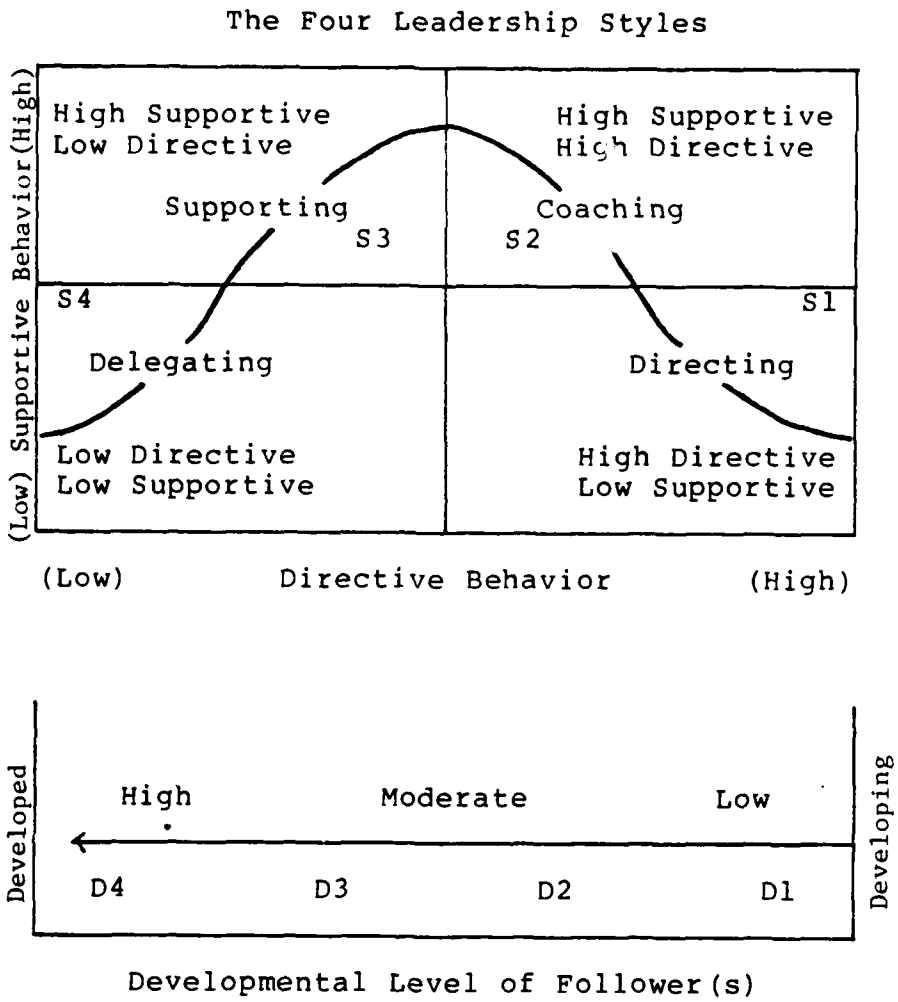

Figure 3. Situational Leadership II (6:186)

This performance improvement is referred to as "maturation."(16:100) The leader will continue to provide high direction and high support until the subordinate reaches the expected/required performance standard. The leader will then decrease the use of directive behavior and move to a supporting behavior style. As the subordinate moves to full maturity, the leader moves into the delegating style where very little direction or support is required. This theory asserts that a leader is capable of performing in any of the quadrants depending upon the maturity level of subordinates. However, most leaders have predominant styles they are most comfortable with. As a tool to determine where a leader fits into the model, Hersey and Blanchard developed the LEAD, an

instrument designed to determine a leader's predominant leadership style while measuring the leader's style range and adaptability (the ability to adjust style in accordance with the demands of a particular situation).

Chapter Three

RESULTS OF THE LEAD: ANALYSIS OF STYLE RANGE AND ADAPTABILITY

We provided the LEAD to the two commanders involved in this case study to determine their predominant leadership styles and their leadership style adaptability--their ability to adjust that predominant style to a given situation. Our purpose was to compare the results of the LEAD with their assessment, their subordinates' assessments, and our assessment of their styles. This enabled us to see if their behavior as measured by the LEAD in accordance with the Situational Leadership II Model would agree with their actual behavior. The leader's dominant style will be determined by the quadrant receiving the most responses. Responses in other quadrants indicate supporting styles.

The following is a graphic portrayal of the commanders' responses indicating the number of responses in each quadrant by each commander:

Quadrant III Low Directive/High Support Commander #1 - 0 Commander #2 - 1	Quadrant II High Directive/High Support Commander #1 - 12 Commander #2 - 6
Quadrant IV Low Directive/Low Support Commander #1 - 0 Commander #2 - 0	Quadrant I High Directive/Low Support Commander #1 - 0 Commander #2 - 5

Note: At least two responses are required in a quadrant for that style to be classified as a supporting style.

The results of the test showed commander #1's style fit completely into the second quadrant of the model, thus, making it his predominant style (every one of his responses indicated a high directive, high support style). The responses of commander #2 were more evenly split between quadrants one and two with two being his predominant and one his supporting style. Commander #2 also indicated a highly directive style but showed a fluctuation between high and low support. Both commanders demonstrated a narrow style range (ability to move in all four quadrants). However, Hersey and Blanchard state that "someone with a narrow style range can be effective over a long period of time if the leader remains in situations which his style has a high probability of success."(7:5) They further state that it is better to have the ability to use two styles effectively than all four inappropriately. There were no responses by either commander in quadrant four (low direction and low support), indicating that, at least in the case of these two commanders, the delegating style is not applicable to a military leader. Taken by themselves, these results would indicate that a successful military leader must exhibit a highly directive style. The results also indicate that leaders can be highly or mildly supportive and still be successful. The key is that even in the case of the commander who did not demonstrate a highly supportive style all the time, he did, in over half the situations presented, indicate that he would use a highly supportive style. Clearly, both commanders' use of directive behavior was an absolute. This absolute use of directive behavior accounts for the narrow style range of both commanders and may well be due to the military leadership environment and the special requirements of military leaders.

A second part of the test's analysis is the measurement of the leader's style adaptability or his ability to use a style that "fits" a particular situation.(7:5) Hersey and Blanchard achieve this by assigning a weight to each response. The weights of the responses range from +2 for the most appropriate response for a given situation to -2 for the least appropriate response. The weights are then added to determine an overall score which indicates the leader's style adaptability (a higher positive total indicates more style flexibility) and range from -24 to +24. The total scores of the commanders in our study were +5 and +2. Oddly, commander #1, who exclusively demonstrated the highly directive and highly supportive style, had the higher flexibility score. However, both commanders demonstrated a positive adaptability factor indicating that both were capable of tailoring their style to a given set of circumstances and selecting an appropriate style. Hersey and Blanchard state, "Style range is not as relevant to effectiveness as is style adaptability; a wide style range will not guarantee success."(7:5)

Using highly directive style with mid-to-high support would seem on the surface, to be the most productive style for a military leader. This style would enable him to effectively communicate his desires to his subordinates (highly directive style) and his responsibility to build cohesion and maintain morale (highly supportive behavior).

In the next section, we will analyze the input from the commanders to see how they saw themselves and look at their leadership styles and philosophies. We will then assess the accuracy of the results of the LEAD given to the two commanders by comparing the results with the information provided by the commanders, their subordinates, and our personal observations.

Chapter Four

COMMANDER'S SELF ANALYSIS

We have seen so far that both commanders in this case study always used highly directive behavior and some level of supportive behavior as identified by the LEAD results. In order to provide background information prior to analysis, this section of the paper focuses on how each of the commanders describes his own leadership style and philosophy.

Battalion Commander #1 is an ROTC graduate who had no particular link to the military until he entered active duty. He believes there is little distinction between leadership and management, and that a person can't be a good leader without being a good manager or vice versa. He also believes there are disparate skills required for being an effective leader and manager, though some people may show stronger talents in one area than the other. He feels that to be a successful battalion commander, a person must possess strong leadership and management skills. Commander #1 felt he concentrated more on leadership efforts primarily because he was fortunate to have had a strong executive officer with outstanding managerial abilities and who ran such daily battalion management functions as recurring reports and suspenses to higher headquarters.

As he began his command tour, commander #1 felt his top leadership priority was to have a combat ready unit which could deploy and fight whenever called on. In order for him to do that, it was only natural that one of the first things he wanted to establish was an atmosphere of trust. This meant he wanted his subordinates to know he trusted them to do their jobs, and hoped they would trust him to hold them accountable for their performances. This type of behavior is an example of Hersey and Blanchard's description of supportive behavior.

Another characteristic used by commander #1 in describing his leadership style was the responsibility he had to listen and communicate with his soldiers. He accomplished this by being highly visible throughout the battalion area, allowing him to talk both formally and informally with his soldiers, again exhibiting supportive behavior. He looked for opportunities to show off his battalion and let his

subordinates get some visibility from the senior leadership of the division whenever the situation would allow. Obviously, there were certain administrative duties that only he could do, but, when possible, he would take care of those duties at some time other than the normal duty day. This afforded him the flexibility to be visible and at times participate in the training of his soldiers, exhibiting both directive and supportive behavior.

Commander #2 entered command with a background similar to commander #1's in that he too was an ROTC graduate with no real military influence up to his entry on active duty. Commander #2 was very emphatic in discussing his top leadership goal--to have the best battalion in the Army. Prior to arriving at his duty station, he had developed a road map, based on his past experiences, which he felt could get the battalion well on its way to achieving his goal. Here commander #2 demonstrated highly directed behavior.

Very soon after assuming command, commander #2 learned that he would have to make some drastic changes in the original game plan he brought with him to the battalion. During a session with the Assistant Division Commander, commander #2 discovered the senior leadership of the division had very low regard for his unit. Additionally, he was told about a series of problems the battalion had encountered in the day to day running of events including high numbers on positive results from urinalysis sweeps and poor results on recent Army Training and Evaluation Programs. Commander #2 told us that he had to quickly make law and order his top priority before his battalion could compete for anything, again exhibiting highly directive behavior.

It is interesting to note here that the junior officers, noncommissioned officers, and soldiers felt the battalion which commander #2 had inherited was considered substandard by everyone from the division commander on down. Ironically, however, commander #2 was very impressed with the junior officers and soldiers in his initial meeting with them and saw as one of his first orders of business the need to eliminate what he saw as an undeserved reputation. Based on this impression, he felt everyone needed some positive reinforcement and a new vision in terms of where the battalion was going and how it was going to get there. In this way, he demonstrated highly supportive behavior.

Commander #2 initially concentrated his efforts on two major themes. He wanted to get his soldiers' attention with regard to law and order and at the same time show them his style was to lead by example; he was part of them and together they were a team. He wanted them to know they had his full

trust and backing, and together their unit was going to be the best in the Army. Part of commander #2's original plan in achieving his goal was to let everyone in the key positions do his job. This is an example that demonstrates his ability to exhibit highly directive and highly supportive behavior. The key here was to establish an atmosphere whereby the organization would only be strong if everyone's input was used, and excellence would only be realized through the combined efforts of all the junior leaders.

Our analysis of the commanders at this stage is that commander #1 entered a situation where the unit was at least average with an established staff. Commander #2, on the other hand, entered a situation where the basic needs of his people were not being met and the unit was in a tenuous situation. Both commanders assessed the situation, determined the maturity level of their subordinates, and demonstrated a particular leadership style appropriate to the situation. Further analysis shows that as their units matured, both commanders adjusted their styles accordingly.

Chapter Five

ANALYSIS OF LEADERSHIP PHILOSOPHIES AND STYLES

We have seen that there are some obvious similarities between both battalion commanders in this case study. As we looked at their personal leadership styles and philosophies, it was readily apparent that both commanders felt their top priority was to develop and maintain an outstanding combat ready battalion. This portion of the paper will look at how each commander assessed his role and relationship with his company commanders and battalion staffs. Additionally, we will see how their actions tie into the Hersey and Blanchard Situational Leadership II Model and how that relationship enabled the two commanders to successfully meet their top priority.

In an article published in a previous edition of Military Intelligence Magazine, one former battalion commander had this to say about the duties and responsibilities of the commanding officer: "First, the commander establishes policies, priorities, procedures, and standards that guide and control his staff and his subordinates'. Second, he is responsible for the morale, good order, training, discipline, readiness and support of his unit."(17:10) Throughout our research, we saw that these two commanders had like views of what was important in achieving and maintaining an effective relationship with their subordinates. This was due to their similar experiences prior to assumption of command. They both felt one of the most important roles for any commander was to set the proper example for all subordinates in everything the battalion did. In order to do that, the commander must be visible and share the hardships with his soldiers. This is clearly an example of supportive behavior as described by Hersey and Blanchard. Hersey and Blanchard say that supportive behavior is the "extent to which the leader engages in interpersonal communications and facilitating behaviors."(7:5) Both agreed that being involved did not mean they had to micro manage, but it did mean they had to be a part of the daily activities of the battalion. In this manner they could establish and maintain a positive socio-economic atmosphere through their presence. Additionally, both felt their duties included being a teacher, mentor and disciplinarian as well as a buffer between their subordinate

commanders and staffs and the senior leadership of the division.

In order to set the proper leadership environment, commander #1 felt the key ingredient in a good relationship with his company commanders was trust. He wanted to trust his commanders to always do their best, and in return he wanted them to know he would always do what was right for them. This desire to establish mutual trust is characteristic of supportive behavior. Commander #1 created an environment whereby his company commanders would want to work hard not only for themselves and their soldiers but also for him and the battalion. He expected subordinates to feel bad when they let any one of the three down. This desire for group cohesion and commitment to each other again highlights commander #1's supportive behavior.

Early in his command tour, commander #1 made it known to his subordinates that he wanted them to fully understand and believe in his standards, priorities, and generally what he felt was important. To an extent, this meant commander #1 wanted to define patterns of organization based on which he and his subordinates could communicate and operate. By doing this, he created an environment that allowed him to counsel and discipline them whenever it was called for. His intent was to aid or assist in the development of his subordinates through direct personal and position power. His policy was to lecture or "chew them out" in his office from behind his desk. This was done to establish formal lines of communication (directive behavior). This clearly demonstrated a superior to subordinate relationship, and for the most part each company commander knew if he was called to the battalion commander's office the situation was probably not going to be pleasant. On the other hand, commander #1 spent a great deal of time in his company commanders' areas where he would counsel, mentor, or just talk with them. This supported his belief that to be an effective battalion commander he had to be visible. This attitude reinforces the results of the LEAD which indicates that commander #1's predominate style was coaching, i.e., high directive and supportive behavior.

Commander #1 knew his battalion could not perform at its peak all the time. He made it a goal to do all things well, but he did not want to concentrate too much on any one particular event at the expense of something else. In terms of training, commander #1 demanded that his company commanders take the lead in training their soldiers. However, he fully expected and accepted mistakes and realized most tasks would not be carried out exactly as he would have done them himself. He had assessed his subordinates' ability to carry out his orders and realized that they may do things differently than

he but would usually be equally as effective. In order for this to be possible, the senior leadership of the division had to foster the kind of attitude that allowed for what commander #1 called "peacetime mistakes." He considered this to be a significant part of their development. Otherwise the learning curve would be less effective.

Commander #1 was very selective in choosing company commanders. He wanted those chosen to really believe they were the best and were something special. He again shows supportive behavior by placing an emphasis on how people feel about themselves. Within the battalion, he publicly preached that his company commanders were the best and came first. They would generally receive priority over the staff officers. This was sometimes more difficult to do than to say because the executive officer's perspective was usually in defense of the staff. Naturally there was a certain amount of give and take depending on what was best for the battalion. This meant that the company commanders were the ones to take the hits when things did not go exactly according to plans, so they had the total support of the battalion commander and usually received the benefit of the doubt if there was any. Again, this demonstrates commander #1's use of supportive behavior.

Commander #1 considered a rich and entertaining social environment necessary for an effective work environment and, therefore, fostered in his junior officers a sense of involvement in all battalion social functions. This enabled the younger wives to feel involved with their husbands' work life. Commander #1 believes this was a major factor in the overall success enjoyed by his battalion.

Many of the things mentioned above about the relationship between commander #1 and his company commanders apply to the battalion staff officers as well. When commander #1 assumed command of his battalion, the executive officer was already there, and he assessed the staff as being very solid. Commander #1 spent the early weeks of his command tour checking and reviewing the systems and procedures that were already established. He wanted to insure that both the roles and responsibilities of his subordinates were well defined (directive behavior). Overall, he was pleased with the quality and effectiveness of the staff he had inherited from his predecessor.

With that in mind, it is easy to see why commander #1 described himself as a bottom-line manager and felt no necessity to involve himself unduly in the details of staff actions. He let the executive officer, who he had assessed as exceptionally competent, run the daily functions in the battalion, and he spent as much time as possible being visible

in the battalion area or with his companies during training. Commander #1 mentioned that he did, however, get deeply involved in managing details of activities his boss was particularly interested in such as a division sponsored event or a visit to his battalion by a VIP.

As a final note, commander #1 had this to say about his leadership and management styles. "I only do those things which only I can do--counselling, leading by example, inspiring, chewing out, moving subordinates and providing a buffer between my battalion and higher headquarters. I'm a hands-off manager and a hands-on leader."

As mentioned earlier in the paper, commander #2 assumed command of a battalion that was not as strong as he had hoped, and after assessing his personnel, he saw the need to redirect his initial plans. Originally, he had hoped to institute a smooth transition from one commander to another merely by making minor changes as he made his presence known. He soon saw, however, that more drastic changes in personnel and in the daily operation of the battalion were in order.

After the major personnel changes occurred, commander #2 decided the best course of action was to update the Standard Operating Procedures of the battalion, almost non-existent as he began his tour, and he knew he could not do this alone. In order to involve all key personnel, he tasked out the requirements to each company commander and staff officer (directive behavior). He believes this paid large dividends in the long run because it forced the subordinates in key positions to learn their jobs and also to learn more about how the battalion functioned. By doing this, he insured that the roles and responsibilities of his subordinates were well defined and that a formal organizational structure was established (directive behavior).

Commander #2 described his feelings and support for his company commanders in much the same way as commander #1. He wanted his company commanders to feel that because he had confidence in them as leaders he was entrusting them with major responsibilities (supportive behavior). Commander #2 indicated that he worked hard at assessing and understanding the strengths and weaknesses of his company commanders and, in turn, helped them to understand those strengths and weaknesses. In this way, he could identify the ones who would perform well in tough, critical situations and the few who should be groomed for future battalion command. Here, commander #2 is clearly exhibiting the follower development cycle of assessing the maturity level and then assisting in further development.

In further describing his relationship with his company commanders, commander #2 said his philosophy was to give as much specific guidance (directive behavior) to them as was needed in certain situations which sometimes resulted in more than the company commander wanted. He said he worked very hard not to command their companies for them, but he stressed that he would not let them fail (directive behavior). Whenever subordinate units in the battalion were involved in training exercises, commander #2 made the company commanders and their key leaders conduct frequent after action reviews. He believed these were an extremely important teaching tool. The battalion policy was to repeat a training event which did not receive a satisfactory rating during the after action review until the set standards were met. This highlights one of commander #2's directive behaviors, his specifying how certain tasks were to be accomplished.

Commander #2 believed one of the largest reasons his battalion was able to achieve success in a relatively short period of time was because of the formal program he developed for conducting Officer Professional Development classes (directive behavior). He used these for both technical and tactical training. This ensured that the junior officers could perform battalion undertakings with knowledge and competence. More important, it gave him the confidence that his company officers were qualified to lead by example and never ask a soldier to do something the leader could not do himself.

With regard to his staff, commander #2 used many of the same procedures that were mentioned about commander #1. Commander #2's staff had access to him twenty-four hours a day if needed. Otherwise, the only specific guidance he gave his executive officer was to maintain a system which would track all the battalion's activities and to hold the other staff officers responsible for their particular areas (directive behavior).

Weekly command and staff meetings organized around a relatively formal agenda prevented finger pointing and encouraged open discussions to iron out any differences of opinion or misunderstandings between commanders and staff officers. This rather structured environment promoted and inspired the junior leaders of the battalion to adopt a feeling of teamwork. Commander #2 focused heavily on several aspects of directive behavior, e.g., defining roles of people, establishing standard operating procedures, formalizing channels of communication, and specifying how certain tasks were to be accomplished. These directive behavioral patterns are also characteristics of commander #1 and are important to any military leader.

We have just discussed how each battalion commander assessed his own relationship with his subordinate commanders and staffs. It is readily apparent that there were many similarities and differences in the two battalion commanders' philosophies and in the manner in which they conducted the daily business of their units. Now we will examine the styles and effectiveness of the commanders as seen by their subordinates.

Commander #1's executive officer described the relationship between the battalion commander and the company commanders this way. "It was a very good working relationship and the company commanders knew exactly where they stood at all times." This was a result of commander #1's establishment of formal means of communicating with his subordinates (directive behavior). Commander #1 was further described as being so forthright with his junior officers that he did not hesitate to call any of them in and read them the riot act when things got off track. On the other hand, he took a very personal interest in counselling his subordinates. He willingly acknowledged his responsibility to develop every junior leader in the battalion both personally and professionally (supportive behavior). He prided himself in setting the leadership example, and he would not tolerate anything less from his subordinates.

Commander #1 had the reputation of showing up unexpectedly in a company area to conduct an unannounced inspection in a certain area of interest. He fully expected the staff officer associated with that particular area to be aware of the status at all times (directive behavior). If he found an area that appeared deficient, he handled it by first allowing the company commander, executive officer and staff officer to fix the problem, but it was a known fact that a similar occurrence better not happen again. Commander #1 was described as totally fair, understanding and above all else, "definitely in charge."

Commander #2 was also very highly regarded by his subordinate officers. The executive officer made this comment about his battalion commander. "Our battalion may not have been the best one in the Army, but it was simply good at accomplishing any mission. The success of the battalion was the result of teamwork; however, it is safe to assume the commander was the driving force behind everything this battalion did." That statement reinforces what commander #2 said in his own assessment of his unit with regard to the importance of teamwork and reiterates the previously shown examples of directive behavior.

Commander #2, described as a good listener, enjoyed a reputation for treating his company commanders with respect. He never threatened them, even in the somewhat tumultuous early days of his tour (supportive behavior). His executive officer also said that "it must be clearly understood that this battalion needed commander #2. It needed to excel and be proud of its accomplishments and to be cared for. Commander #2 did all these things with enthusiasm."

A former company commander who served under commander #2 mentioned another key aspect of his battalion commander's style: "He was a team player with the other battalion commanders which helped the reputation of the whole battalion. He helped us regain our dignity and self respect at a time when everyone needed it" (supportive behavior).

Commander #2's executive officer attributed his boss' success to the following initiatives: He demanded that all leaders demonstrate a positive 'can do' attitude, he carefully placed the right people in the right positions, he detailed prior planning, and above all else he insisted on maintaining a competitive spirit in all the battalion did.

As a closing comment about commander #2, his executive officer stated, "I cannot over emphasize the intensity in the way the battalion and the commander attacked missions. This was a direct result of the commander's competitiveness. He did not want a second rate unit and as a result of his leadership and management skills, we had a very outstanding one."

Chapter Six

IMPLICATIONS OF THIS CASE STUDY

This study was not undertaken to validate the Hersey and Blanchard Situational Leadership II Model as a vehicle for the development of military leaders. The model was only used as a medium for explaining the process by which two commanders led. The analysis shows that both commanders followed the principles of the Life Cycle Theory of Situational Leadership to a degree. However, the circumstances of military leadership, particularly battalion command, require commanders to maintain close reigns on their organizations which, therefore, place limits on how far the development process can proceed. This study is also about the ability of two commanders to recognize the importance of assessing themselves and their subordinates, determining where they wanted their battalions to go, and leading their battalions in the achievement of their aims. Along the way, both used highly directive behavior, while also supporting. These two commanders were experienced and astute enough to recognize their strengths and weaknesses and those of their subordinates in order to insure that tasks were taken on by the right people. They both also recognized that there were certain things that only they could do.

Our analysis shows that the Hersey and Blanchard Situational Leadership II Model is a means by which commanders can understand the follower assessment process and the resulting fit with leadership style. The examples in this case study demonstrate the importance of accurate and continuous assessment of followers. Without accurate assessment, the leader may not choose the most suitable leadership style. This may result in wasted time, stifling initiative, and non-productive effort.

Our analysis also shows that motivated leaders motivate and energize subordinates through the use of supportive behavior. Unlike the situation described by Douglas McGregor's Theory X where all subordinates are assumed to be lazy and unmotivated, military leaders must insure that they make an accurate assessment. Unimaginative or unmotivated leaders who don't make the effort to accurately assess their subordinates will stifle the development of their organization

and people. Without continual subordinate development, the unit will stagnate, the commander will lose the opportunity to "mature" his unit, and subordinates will not develop the skills they may later require to lead effectively. We conclude then that commanders must have the ability to exhibit supportive behavior when necessary in order to be effective.

We also found some evidence of micromanagement which generally results from highly directive behavior. Some commanders must micromanage more than others due to the developmental level of their subordinates. However, directive behavior does not always equate to micromanagement. The military leader must be aware of those events which are crucial to the success of his unit. He must then assess the ability of his subordinates to handle them and focus his efforts accordingly. Unfortunately, some military micromanagers don't know when to tone their highly directive behavior down. Their actions become just as stifling to organizational development and effectiveness as those of their unimaginative counterparts.

Central to the success of both commanders was their strong personal and position power, their genuine concern for their people, and their desire to develop and maintain the best battalion possible. Both were extremely effective.

Many commanders have the same abilities and face the same challenges but somehow miss the mark. A contributing factor may well be their inability to accurately assess the "maturity" level of their people resulting in an inability to fully develop them and use the most appropriate leadership style. However, the skills commanders require to lead effectively can be learned and developed.

Chapter Seven

SUMMARY

The analysis of the leadership philosophies and styles of the two commanders has shown that they were in fact very directive and generally supportive leaders who understood the importance of accurately assessing the developmental level of their subordinates and using a leadership style commensurate with the requirements of their individual situations.

The fact that they didn't show a tendency to use the "supporting" or "delegating" styles is a function of the environment in which they operate and does not lessen the value of the Situational Leadership II Model. Military leaders are constantly challenged by changing requirements, personnel turbulence, and the pressure to get it right the first time every time. In addition, the constant personnel turbulence alone makes it highly improbable that a military organization could ever fully develop to the point where leaders would be able to use the "delegating" style. However, even if personnel turbulence could be minimized, the military environment generally requires a highly directive behavior of its leaders to meet requirements and the special obligations of military command. There is an absolute need for consistent and firm leadership in military organizations merely by the nature of their mission--the possibility of leading soldiers into combat. The importance of supporting people and their inter-personal relationships and maintaining their morale is also recognized within military organizations thereby creating a need for supportive behavior by commanders. In many ways, the social structure and climate of an organization is just as critical to its success as its ability to train and maintain. The military leader, therefore, while being required to exhibit directive behavior to meet present requirements and prepare his unit for combat, must also realize the importance of supporting the growth and longer term development of his organization. In some ways, the directive behavior meets the near term or immediate requirements while the supportive behavior sets the stage for future success. The bottom line from our analysis is that an effective commander will always demonstrate a significant degree of directive behavior while providing support. This is an echo of the old adage, "mission first, people always."

The two commanders in this study were both effective in their leadership and successful in their commands. Although they did not run through the life-cycle model of situational leadership from "directing" to "delegating," they did modify their styles based upon the situation and demonstrate the right mix of directive and supportive behavior. The keys to their success in using the appropriate style were their abilities to recognize their strengths and those of their subordinates and the development of mutual trust and confidence in individual and group abilities throughout their organizations. Although the two commanders didn't label them as such, their actions were the same as those described by Hersey and Blanchard in the assessment of the developmental level of subordinates and of the organization. These actions enabled the commanders to adapt their leadership style to situations and ensure the future growth and development of their organization.

The Hersey and Blanchard Situational Leadership II Model can be a very effective aid to the commander in his development process but is of itself no guarantee for success. One cannot study the model to determine the correct or most appropriate leadership style to demonstrate in a given situation. However, it is our belief that the model can be of significant benefit to the military leaders. Through the application of the principles of assessing subordinate development, military leaders will understand where to direct their efforts. However, they must also realize the absolute importance of directive behavior and have an appreciation of the application of supportive behavior in determining leadership style in order to be fully effective.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

LEADER EFFECTIVENESS AND ADAPTABILITY DESCRIPTION (LEAD)

LEADER EFFECTIVENESS AND ADAPTABILITY DESCRIPTION (LEAD)
Paul Hersey and Kenneth H. Blanchard

Directions: Assume you are involved in each of the following twelve situations. READ each item carefully and THINK about what you would do in each circumstance. Then CIRCLE the letter of the alternative that you think would most closely describe your behavior in the situation presented. Circle only one choice.

1. Your subordinates have not been responding to your friendly conversation and obvious concern for their welfare. Their performance is in a tailspin.

   A. Emphasize the use of uniform procedures and the necessity for task accomplishment.
   B. Make yourself available for discussion but do not push.
   C. Talk with subordinates and then set goals.
   D. Be careful not to intervene.

2. The observable performance of your group is increasing. You have been making sure that all members are aware of their roles and standards.

   A. Engage in friendly interaction, but continue to make sure that all members are aware of their roles and standards.
   B. Take no definite action.
   C. Do what you can to make the group feel important and involved.
   D. Emphasize the importance of deadlines and tasks.

3. Members of your group are unable to solve a problem themselves. You have normally left them alone. Group performance and interpersonal relations have been good.

   A. Involve the group and together engage in problem-solving.
   B. Let the group work it out.
   C. Act quickly and firmly to correct and redirect.
   D. Encourage the group to work on the problem and be available for discussion.

4. You are considering a major change. Your subordinates have a fine record of accomplishment. They respect the need for change.

   A. Allow group involvement in developing the change, but do not push.
   B. Announce changes and then implement them with close supervision.
   C. Allow the group to formulate its own direction.
   D. Incorporate group recommendations, but direct the change.

5. The performance of your group has been dropping during the last few months. Members have been unconcerned about meeting objectives. They have continually needed reminding to do their tasks on time. Redefining roles has helped in the past.

   A. Allow the group to formulate its own direction.
   B. Incorporate group recommendations, but see that objectives are met.
   C. Redefine goals and supervise carefully.
   D. Allow group involvement in setting goals.

6. You stepped into an efficiently run situation. The previous administrator ran a tight ship. You want to maintain a productive situation, but would like to begin humanizing the environment.

   A. Do what you can to make the group feel important and involved.
   B. Emphasize the importance of deadlines.
   C. Be careful not to intervene.
   D. Get the group involved in decision-making, but see that objectives are met.

7. You are considering major changes in your organizational structure. Members of the group have made suggestions about needed change. The group has demonstrated flexibility in its day-to-day operations.

   A. Define the change and supervise carefully.
   B. Acquire the group's approval on the change and allow members to organize the implementation.
   C. Be willing to make changes as recommended, but maintain control over implementation.
   D. Avoid confrontation; leave things alone.

8. Group performance and interpersonal relations are good. You feel somewhat unsure about your lack of direction of the group.

   A. Leave the group alone.
   B. Discuss the situation with the group and then initiate necessary changes.
   C. Take steps to direct your subordinates toward working in a well defined manner.
   D. Be careful of hurting boss-subordinate relations by being too directive.

9. Your superior has appointed you to lead a task force that is far overdue in making requested recommendations for change. The group is not clear about it's goals. Attendance at sessions has been poor. The meetings have turned into social gatherings. Potentially, the group has the talent necessary to help.

   A. Let the group work it out.
   B. Incorporate group recommendations, but see that objectives are met.
   C. Redefine goals and supervise carefully.
   D. Allow group involvement in setting goals, but do not push.

10. Your subordinates, usually able to take responsibility, are not responding to your recent redefining of standards.

   A. Allow group involvement in redefining standards, but do not push.
   B. Redefine standards and supervise carefully.
   C. Avoid confrontation by not applying pressure.
   D. Incorporate group recommendations, but see that new standards are met.

11. You have been promoted to a new position. The previous supervisor was uninvolved in the affairs of the group. The group has adequately handled it's tasks and direction. Group interrelations are good.

   A. Take steps to direct subordinates toward working in a well defined manner.
   B. Involve subordinates in decision-making and reinforce good contributions.
   C. Discuss past performance with the group and then examine the need for new practices.
   D. Continue to leave the group alone.

12. Recent information indicates some internal difficulties among subordinates. The group has a remarkable record of accomplishment. Members have effectively maintained long-range goals and have worked in harmony for the past year. All are well qualified for the task.

   A. Try out your solution with subordinates and examine the need for new practices.
   B. Allow group members to work it out themselves.
   C. Act quickly and firmly to correct and redirect.
   D. Make yourself available for discussion, but be careful of hurting boss-subordinate relations.

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